Epithelial Calcium and Phosphate Transport: Molecular and Cellular Aspects

Progress in Clinical and Biological Research: Volume 168

Edited by Felix Bronner and Meinrad Peterlik

Alan R. Liss; New York, 1984

xxiii + 392 pages. £52.00

This contains the proceedings of the Second International Workshop on Calcium and Phosphate Transport across Biomembranes, held in Vienna in March 1984. It consists of 58 short articles, reproduced photographically from typescript. These deal with a variety of topics, including Ca^{2+}-ATPase, Na-Ca exchange and the measurement of intracellular free Ca^{2+}. Strictly speaking, only about half of the articles deal with epithelial calcium and phosphate transport, and a few are on totally unrelated topics.

The articles vary in quality, from good to downright awful. Some report work in progress, while others give only a brief summary of the authors' work, and refer to published papers for more details. The latter tends to be frustrating, particularly because it is prevalent with the more highly respected authors. There is an index, but unfortunately there are no reports of the discussion that must have occurred. This makes it difficult for the reader to assess current areas of controversy, such as the importance of Na-Ca exchange at the basolateral surface in epithelia.

The current volume is intended as a continuation of the proceedings of the First International Workshop on Calcium and Phosphate Transport across Biomembranes, published as Calcium and Phosphate Transport across Biomembranes, edited by F. Bronner and M. Peterlik, Academic Press; New York, 1981. It will obviously be of most value to those who already have that volume. Although it provides a collected source of information on a variety of topics, the coverage is uneven, depending as it does on those who attended the workshop. Conference proceedings have to be exceptional to make the resulting publication worthwhile. This is not.

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Intracellular Perfusion of Excitable Cells

Edited by P.G. Kostyuk and O.A. Krishtal

John Wiley & Sons; Chichester, 1984

133 pages. £10.00 (paperback), £20.00 (hardback)

The perfusion of the classical giant nerve preparation, squid axon, was first performed over twenty years ago. Since then a variety of perfusion or dialysis methods for other excitable cells have been developed. The aims of such techniques have been two-fold; either to change intracellular composition and so study its effects on membrane excitability, or simply as a means to achieve low-